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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /089 W
----------117841 242105Z /64
R 240910Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7005
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: WHITE POLITICAL MANEUVERING

1. SUMMARY: THE NATIONAL PARTY OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA IS REPORTED TO BE SEEKING THE ABANDONMENT OF ONE MAN, ONE VOTE ELECTIONS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT INSTEAD OF A TURNHALLE-TYPE INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN NAMIBIA, SHOULD THE WESTERN INITIATIVE FAIL. ALTHOUGH THE NATIONAL PARTY PERCEIVES THAT THIS IS IN THE WHITE INTEREST, THE SAG HAS NOT ACCEDED TO THE REQUEST. THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, MEANWHILE, IS ATTEMPTING TO STEP UP ITS PUBLICITY ACTIVITIES INSIDE NAMIBIA. END SUMMARY.
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2. EMBASSY SOURCES IN WINDHOEK HAVE CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT THE NATIONAL PARTY OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA (NP) IS PUSHING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT BASED ON THE ORIGINAL TURNHALLE CONSTITUTION IF EFFORTS TO REACH AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT ON NAMIBIA ARE NOT SUCCESSFUL. THE PRESS REPORTS, WHICH

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APPEARED IN THE CITIZEN ON MARCH 17 AND RAPPORT ON
MARCH 19, STATE THAT THE MAIN REASON WHY NATIONAL PARTY
LEADERS REQUESTED THEIR MARCH 15 MEETING WITH PRIME
MINISTER VORSTER (CAPE TOWN 0526) WAS TO REQUEST THE
CANCELLATION OF THE PLANNED ONE MAN, ONE VOTE ELECTIONS,
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT, AND THE
HOLDING OF A WHITE ELECTION TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE
NP OR DIRK MUDGE'S REPUBLICAN PARTY (RP) SHOULD REPRESENT
THE WHITES IN AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO
RAPPORT, THE PRIME MINISTER REBUFFED THE NP LEADERS.
ALTHOUGH NP LEADER A.H. DU PLESSIS CALLED THE RAPPORT
STORY "NONSENSE," THE SAG FOREIGN MINISTER'S SPECIAL
ASSISTANT, NEIL VAN HEERDEN, MARCH 23 PRIVATELY CONFIRMED THE
BASIC POINTS OF THE STORY. VAN HEERDEN SAID THAT SOUTH WEST NATS
HAD BEEN INSPIRED BY IAN SMITH'S "SUCCESS." DIE SUIDWESTER,
OFFICIAL MOUTHPIECE OF THE NP, EDITORIALIZED ON MARCH 21 THAT
IF THE WESTERN INITIATIVE FAILS, AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT UNDER
THE "GENERALLY ACCEPTED TURNHALLE PRINCIPLES" SHOULD BE
ESTABLISHED.

3. COMMENT: THE NP BELIEVES IT WOULD WIN A WHITE ELECTION
AND THEREFORE BE ABLE TO CONTROL A TURNHALLE-TYPE INTERIM
GOVERNMENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT WOULD GAIN LITTLE
SUPPORT IN A GENERAL ELECTION, EVEN IF ONLY AGAINST DTA.
ACCORDING TO VAN HEERDEN, THE SOUTH WEST NP LEADERS FOUND
SYMPATHETIC EARS IN THE HIERARCHY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
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NATIONAL PARTY AND DECIDED TO PUSH THEIR CASE. THEIR
ARGUMENTS, HOWEVER, WERE EVIDENTLY REJECTED BY VORSTER, WHO,
UNDER THE APPARENT URGING OF PIK BOTHA, MUST HAVE SEEN THAT AN
INTERNAL SOLUTION INVOLVING ONE MAN, ONE VOTE ELECTIONS TO A
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WOULD APPEAR MORE CREDIBLE AND STAND
A GREATER CHANCE OF INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE THAN WOULD
THE NP PLAN. END COMMENT.

4. DIRK MUDGE'S REPUBLICAN PARTY, MEANWHILE, IS
CONTINUING A FULL-SCALE POLITICAL CAMPAIGN. ITS OFFICIAL
NEWSPAPER, DIE REPUBLIKEIN, CONTINUES TO CRITICIZE
THE NP AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY. WITH MONEY NO OBJECT, THE
DTA IS HOPING TO LAUNCH A COMMERCIAL TELEVISION STATION
IN NAMIBIA WHICH WILL ENABLE IT TO EXPAND GREATLY ITS
PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES. THE RP IS ALSO CONSIDERING LAUNCHING
GERMAN AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS TO COMPLEMENT ITS
AFRIKAANS PAPER DIE REPUBLIKEIN. THE EDITOR OF
WINDHOEK'S ONLY GERMAN NEWSPAPER TOLD US PRIVATELY
THAT HE WAS APPROACHED BY RP OFFICIALS WHO TOLD HIM
THAT UNLESS HE DISPLAYED A MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE
TOWARD DTA, THEY WOULD BEGIN A PAPER WHICH WOULD PUT
HIM OUT OF BUSINESS. RP AND DTA CONTINUE TO STAGE

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FREQUENT PUBLIC CAMPAIGN MEETINGS, AND MUDGE'S
OFFICE INFORMS US THAT HE HENCEFORTH PLANS TO SPEND THE FIRST
TEN DAYS OF EVERY MONTH CAMPAIGNING IN OVAMBO.
BOWDLER

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